

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

H.R. 961, THE CLEAN WATER AMENDMENTS ACT OF 1995

HON. CARDISS COLLINS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 1995

Mrs. COLLINS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I oppose H.R. 961, the Clean Water Amendments Act of 1995. It is interesting that the Republicans have continually claimed to have an interest in bringing common sense to the legislative process and yet they are now proposing taking one of the most successful environmental laws on the books and recklessly and nonsensically gutting it. This Dirty Water Act is a threat to our health and should be rejected soundly.

Almost half of the lakes and rivers in America are currently so polluted that it is not safe to fish or swim in them. The Clean Water Act was passed to improve this horrific situation and has been steadily improving the quality and the safety of the waters across our country. Yet, now, with our environment still not even close to the level of clean that it needs to be, the Republicans are foolishly working to overturn and undermine this most critically important clean water law.

In the State of Illinois, as in the other 49 States, substantial improvements in the quality of water have been made over the past 20 years but there is still a long way to go. In fact, 91 percent of Illinois' lakes and 55 percent of our rivers and streams are not safe for fishing or swimming or are so dead from pollution that they cannot support aquatic life. H.R. 961 would halt the progress that has been made so far and dangerously jeopardize the future health of Illinois' waterways through several damaging provisions.

First, the bill would undermine the Great Lakes initiative which seeks to control the amount of toxic chemicals being dumped into Lake Michigan and the other Great Lakes. Since this is the source of drinking water for my constituents, the quality of Lake Michigan's water is of primary interest and concern. Currently, because of high levels of mercury and PCB's, there is an advisory for women of child-bearing age, pregnant women, and children not to eat more than one fish meal per month from Lake Michigan. Lake Michigan trout now contain PCB levels that are more than 180 times their target and likely cause thousands of cancer deaths in the area.

The Great Lakes initiative seeks to improve this situation by organizing the Great Lakes border States in a unified Federal-State partnership to clean up the Great Lakes. This model initiative should be promoted and encouraged rather than weakened and undermined as H.R. 961 seeks to do.

In addition, H.R. 961 dramatically alters the definition of wetlands that are protected and eliminates the current legal protection for 70 percent of Illinois' wetlands. We need only think back to the Mississippi floods of 1993 to remember how critically important wetlands

are to flood protection. Illinois has already lost 90 percent of its acres of natural wetlands and this loss of nature's flood absorption system has caused billions of dollars worth of damages. The Illinois State Water Survey estimates that every one percent increase in wetland acreage would lead to a four percent decrease in flood levels. It seems extremely short-sighted and risky to me to further reduce our wetlands and cause even more severe flooding in the years ahead.

Further, the Dirty Water Act does not address the critical issue of polluted run-off. Polluted runoff from fields, roads and cities is Illinois' number one water quality problem. It was also responsible for the cryptosporidium outbreak in Milwaukee that caused 400,000 people to become ill, and 130 children, senior citizens, and people with AIDS to become seriously or fatally ill in 1993. Seemingly, after the tragedy in Milwaukee, this bill would be used as an opportunity to take specific steps to address polluted run-off problems.

Mr. Speaker, the recklessness of this bill astounds me. Our lakes and streams are so polluted that they are almost unusable and they are posing a direct threat to our health. How much further do we want to go? Do we want to wait until all the fish die and every city experiences a Milwaukee-like tragedy? This is certainly not what my constituents want to see and I will not stand by and allow our lakes and streams to be turned into sewers. I urge my colleagues to join me in rejecting this dangerous bill.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMBERS OF THE RETIRED AND SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 1995

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the members of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program [RSVP]. Tomorrow afternoon, Friday, May 19, 1995, the RSVP of Macomb County is saluting the many seniors who provide vital volunteer services at a luncheon in Clinton Township, MI.

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program is a nationally recognized program for persons over 55 who serve as volunteers in their communities. In the 10th Congressional District, Catholic Services of Macomb sponsors RSVP at the local level.

By matching the talents, knowledge, and interest of volunteers with community needs, the RSVP maximizes its services provided to the needy and ill among us. RSVP volunteers serve in schools, hospitals, community centers and with numerous social, health, and welfare organizations. Last year, 433 registered volunteers performed over 50,000 hours of service and assisted 55 nonprofit agencies. The devotion RSVP volunteers have displayed to their community is an inspiration. Their contribu-

tions are many and they deserve our gratitude for their compassion and work.

Taking an active role in one's community is a responsibility we all share, but few fulfill. I applaud all of the RSVP members who rather than retire to the easy chair, continue to serve our communities.

I commend the members of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program for their efforts and encourage them to continue their good work. Please join me in saluting the RSVP of Macomb on the event of their volunteer recognition luncheon.

HONORING JOHN VINCENT FIORE ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. ESTEBAN EDWARD TORRES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 1995

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize, John Vincent Fiore, vice president, trade relations of Pepsi-Cola West. Mr. Fiore is retiring from Pepsi-Cola after 41 years of service.

Mr. Fiore attended Northwestern University and specialized in business management and advertising. Prior to joining Pepsi-Cola, he served in the U.S. Army.

He has been an active member of the Mexican-American Grocers Association, California State Package Store and Tavern Owners Association, Korean Grocers Association, Chinese Grocers Association, and the National Conference of Christians and Jews. He is the past president of RecyCal and a member of the political affairs committee for the California Nevada Soft Drink Association.

In addition, under Mr. Fiore's direction, Pepsi-Cola has become actively involved with community youth programs in an effort to guide young people in the right direction. Pepsi-Cola has participated in public awareness programs such as Just Say No To Drugs and Don't Drop Out Of School. In his community and company, he has made contributions to the minority community so that it may grow and prosper.

Mr. Speaker, it is with pride that I rise to recognize my friend, John V. Fiore, and I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting him for his outstanding commitment to his community.

PUBLIC BROADCASTING

HON. MICHAEL G. OXLEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 1995

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, 30 years ago, the creators of public broadcasting proposed funding it through a trust fund capitalized by various fees and taxes on commercial broadcasters. The proposal went nowhere.

Like other government-funded agencies today, public broadcasting is being asked to

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